

Claims 1-13 (canceled)

14. (previously presented) A hand held gardening implement, comprising:

- a. a frame having a longitudinal axis, a proximal end, and a distal end;
- b. a working element for piercing the ground in the performance of a gardening operation attached to said frame at said proximal end of said frame, said working element projecting away from said frame in a direction which is substantially transverse to the longitudinal axis of said frame;
- c. a brace attached to said frame at the distal end of said frame, said brace including a cushion having a surface oriented for contacting an upwardly directed portion of the forearm of a user of the gardening implement;
- d. a handle intermediate said working element and said brace, said handle projecting away from said frame in a direction which is substantially transverse to the longitudinal axis of said frame and which is opposite to the direction in which said working element projects from said frame, said handle including a resilient grip; and,
- e. said brace, except for said cushion thereof, and said frame being formed of circular metallic rod stock.

15. (previously presented) The hand held gardening implement as defined in claim 14, wherein said working element consists of a plurality of tines.

16. (previously presented) The hand held gardening implement as defined in claim 14, wherein said working element consists of a digging tool.

17. (new) A hand held gardening implement, comprising:
 - a. a frame having a longitudinal axis, a proximal end, and a distal end;
 - b. a working element for piercing the ground in the performance of a gardening operation permanently attached to said frame at said proximal end of said frame, said working element projecting away from said frame in a direction which is substantially transverse to the longitudinal axis of said frame;
 - c. a brace attached to said frame at the distal end of said frame, said brace including a cushion having a surface oriented for contacting an upwardly directed portion of the forearm of a user of the gardening implement;
 - d. a handle intermediate said working element and said brace, said handle projecting away from said frame in a direction which is substantially transverse to the longitudinal axis of said frame and which is opposite to the direction in which said working element projects from said frame, said handle including a resilient grip;
 - e. said brace, except for said cushion thereof, and said frame being formed of circular metallic rod stock;
 - f. said working element consisting of a plurality of tines; and,
 - g. said working element consisting of a digging tool.